THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The target of STD PCOs in Rajasthan during 1997-98 is 6000.

(b) Pending applications as on 30.6.97 are 13298.

(c) No separate target is fixed for Post Offices. Eligible applicants with suitable space in Post Offices are also considered for allotment of STD PCOs by the STD PCO Allotment Committee.

Issuance of Free Railway Passes to Deaf and Blind Persons

1441. DR. A.K. PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to issue free Railway Passes to the deaf and blind persons;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) At present concessions to Deaf and Dumb persons (both afflictions together) is already available to the extent of 50% in I/II/SL Class. Blind persons are also accorded 75% concession in fares of Ist, IInd/SL class, alone or with an escort.

Completion of Jammu-Udhampur Line

1442. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of Jammu-Udhampur railway line alongwith the expenditure incurred thereon;

(b) the time by which the above line is likely to be completed;

(c) whether three years ago the then Railway Minister had announced that Jammu-Udhampur Railway Line would be extended upto Leh;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(e) the estimated amount is likely to be required for this purpose; and

(f) the total length and estimated cost of the railway projects that are being taken in hand in Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The construction work on Jammu-Udhampur new line is in full swing. The expenditure incurred on this line upto 31.3.97 is Rs. 235.18 crores.

(b) By 31.12.99.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No survey has been conducted as such no estimated cost is available.

(f)

Name of the work	Length (in Kms)	Cost (Rs. in Cr)
Jammu-Udhampur	53	331.52
Udhampur-Baramula	290	2500.00

[Translation]

Complaints about Bribes

1443. SHRIMATI KETAKI DEVI SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the incidence of taking bribes for executing the jobs pertaining to installation of telephone connections from one exchange to another;

(b) if so, the number of complaints received by the Government during 1996-97 till now in this regard;

(c) whether the Government have enquired into the said complaints; and

(d) if so, the action taken against the persons found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

World Bank Aid for Railway Projects

1444. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :
SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Bank has refused to finance some of the Railway projects during the last few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the World Bank has also refused to finance the second phase of the Mumbai Urban Transport Project; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, at the time of project identification, World Bank poses certain conditionalities and only after those have been accepted by borrowers, the projects are taken up.

(c) No, Sir. World Bank have not finally wirhdrawn from MUTP-II. World Bank had funded some project